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POEMS



POEMS

BY

SIR ARCHIBALD H. CAMPBELL



LONDON
PRIVATELY PRINTED AT THE
CHISWICK PRESS
1910

PF-6005
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TO MY WIFE

“TAKE these poor rhymes,” I say to her whose face
Is as the sunbeam out of wintry space.
Whose dear eyes smile acknowledgement of love,
So true to cheer, so tender to approve.
“Take these poor rhymes, and in them read the whole
Secret of life, as spoken soul to soul,
Secret that stands the burden of the day
And grows more sacred on the waning way.”

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PRIMROSES

TREGOTHNAN

BETWEEN two woodland glades a carpet
spread
Of primrose, rose and mauve, each fairy face
Pale-tinted upward peeps from hollow space,
In sooth too fair a joy for human tread;
Their starry petals deck this shrine for Spring.
Come, pause awhile on yonder bench of green,
And dream of ladies gay in silken sheen,
Who dance with courtly swains in sunlit scene,
Till phantoms pass, and flowers their masque begin.

ANEMONES

ON THE BANK, TREGYE

WIND-FLOWERS they call you, hosts all
a-shivering

Shining resplendent in scarlet and blue;
Butterflies flaunting hover above you
Saffron and azure, still and then quivering;
These, come confess, you salute as they pass.
Wild winds caress you 'neath treacherous skies,
Sunbeams attract you to open closed eyes,
Dew-drops refresh you, yet all feign surprise
That flowers of the wind should stay in the grass.

GUIDARELLO GUIDARELLI

RAVENNA

“Requiescat in pace”

SLEEP, warrior, sleep and take thy rest in
peace,

In sombre haven far from earthly strife.

From out of darkness once rushed a strange release;
A holy calm reflects a happy life.

Armoured limbs repose here, since death's fond
embrace

Proved eager to reclaim thee from the fight;
Gently folded eyelids mark no scornful face,
And stern-set teeth betray no broken flight.

Rest, warrior, rest as even when the sun
Sinks slowly down behind the hills of gold,
Leaving purple shadows stealing one by one
Across a world at peace. Thy tale is told:
Thy mystery is guarded: years thy secret keep:
No stranger's hand dares lift the veil aside:
Lives of men are sweeter for thy death's sweet
sleep;
Within this panelled shrine thy peace abide.

“AU CŒUR DE LA VIE”

“**A**U cœur de la Vie!” Mysteries yet unravelled,
Riddles yet unsolved, songs of praise unsung,

Winding paths untrod, distant tracts untravelled,
Oceans yet unsailed, loosened chords unstrung!

“Au cœur de la Vie!” Love lost in love’s wooing
Countless years ago! Star-drifts moving fast
Far across the heaven! Destined fate undoing
All that she has done in dim ages past!

“Au cœur de la Vie!” Can Life promise duly
That at her heart’s core men shall find their prize?
“What was once is now, and moreover truly
Evermore shall be”—Life to man replies.

WISTARIA

ADDERBURY

TRESSES of blossom fast held in the breezes
Scenting the air, perfuming the earth,
Emblem of springtide's return that so pleases
Man's happy sense in nature's rebirth.

Clusters of purple, now swaying and tossing,
Tendrils so pale, soft pencilled in brown,
Outline the mullion windows, embossing
Fairy design of Eastern renown.

Recalling visions of days that delighted
Youth's sunlit dreams on Como's fair shore:
Pendulous clusters with banksias united,
What would I give to see them once more?

Treasured possessions in life's meagre story?
Gold that I gave? and gold that I've lent?
Yes all—to behold that God-given glory
Brighten the days once heedlessly spent.

WISTARIA

Here in the home-land the sunshine adorning
Fashions pale flowers a shade paler hue.
Diffusing fragrance this Whitsuntide morning,
Life-giving thrill, a bolt from the blue!

MORNING: EVENING

A CHAFING doubt, a frenzied spite,
May kindle soon a world of pain—
The morning joy fast fades from sight
To leave my thoughts in tangled skein.

Ere twilight falls, the sunset blends
A myriad host of living things—
My aching heart shall make amends
To clear those depths where sadness clings.

COMPTON WYNYATES

OLD Tudor house of wondrous antique fame!
Whose red bricks pale beneath yon redder
rose:

O'er gabled bays the honeysuckle grows.
A throbbing world reveres thine honoured name.

Here strange calm reigns in silence still as still,
And mysteries weird surround thy grass-grown
keep;

A circling pigeon stirs this well of sleep;
The crimson thorns are gay on sheltering hill,

Where lilacs blow. One gnarled laburnum gold
Stands like a sentry on the entrance side,
To guard with honour and with wary pride
Both Tudor rose and royal crown of old.

So halcyon spring makes verdant hill and plain;
We almost see unfold the sweet briar's leaves.
Two swallows build beneath the cornice eaves,
For Spring hath brought the swallows home again.

COMPTON WYNATES

Dame Nature smiles, then with a magic wand
Shapes guelder roses into balls of snow,
Tall lupins blue, red peonies aglow,
Her blue-green kirtle spread o'er all the land.

Yet past scans past—the future all unknown!
What message shall that future speak to thee
Standing so still in trust and constancy?
Whilst armies move and kings betray their throne,

Whilst policies evolve, who counts their cost?
Men boast vain words, then vanish into space,
So vain are men, so breathless moves the pace
Which marks the fate of victories won and lost.

Old Tudor house of wondrous antique fame,
Whose red bricks flush beneath yon setting sun!
The red rose leaves are falling one by one!
A passing world upholds thine honoured name.

NUNMONKTON

A DRIVING mist o'er the grasses dank,
A ferry boat over the Ouse;
An old-world house on a leafy bank,
 Where the winds play fast and loose.
In a garden close a leaden God
 Sounds a note to the winds at play
Down grassy paths, where no foot has trod
 For many a live-long day.

An old white church built of Norman stone,
 Where the blessing of God is said;
Where yew-trees tall by the path have grown
 To shade the graves of the dead.
Beyond the gate down the lime-tree walk
 Stands a maypole to crown the green—
Village folk stay to gossip and talk
 Of many things said and seen.—

NUNMONKTON

A church where monks on their homeward way
Crept in with their burden of care;
Where nuns fell down on their knees to pray
That God would answer their prayer.
But monks and nuns passed on in quest
Through the region of Time and Space,
Leaving a listless and wild unrest
To visit this wind-swept place.

TO A WHITE BUTTERFLY

THOU soarest on higho'er moorland spaces—
Purple patches of heather in bloom,—
Where the bracken grows in shadowy places,
Reaching afar for expanding room,
Whence thy filmy wings may flutter aloft
In the air of light and liberty,
A spectre of white, unblemished and soft,
Lost in the haze of an azure sky.

Whilst I lie held fast to the earth beneath,
Sharing in common with creeping things
The canopied fern, the peat-scented heath;
Straining to follow thy trembling wings,
I stretch from the clutch of wanton Despair—
The shades of the Past stand scowling by;—
To feel free at last from the toil of Care
Is the wish of my heart ere I come to die.

A GREETING

I SHALL come to thee, Beloved,
 Across the stage of years;
Perchance to find thee waiting there,
 Perchance to dry thy tears,
Perchance to see thee smiling, dear,
 With arms outstretched to me,
And to hear the old-world greeting,
 To learn that love is free.

I shall wait for thee, Beloved,
 For years are fleeting fast,
Until the golden sunlight breaks
 Through misty dawn at last,
Until the glistening moonlight fades
 Away in silver sheen,
And seasons change for ever all
 That Death has left unseen.

A GREETING

I shall rest with thee, Beloved,
In that land far away
I hear strange voices calling me,
God knows I cannot stay:
But my heart is faint and weary,
My way is dark and cold,
And my feet have wandered idly
From paths we trod of old.

I shall come to thee, Beloved,
Across the stage of years,
And Love shall calm our longings,
And Faith shall banish fears.

CONSECRATION: UNION: POWER

STAY, Lord, awhile to consecrate this hour,
To hallow holy bread and wine,
To sanctify with fire divine
The restless soul, the listless mind with power
To brace; so men may challenge thoughts that break
Like angry seas on rocks and shore;
Suggestive thought rolls in the more
Till storm be past, till calm of peace awake.

Stay, Lord, awhile, in union close abide,
So shalt Thou prove in mystic way
The final record of that day
That calls men far from wanderings wild and wide;
And in this union closed with Thee we ask
For all who stand aloof, apart,
That Thou wilt gently touch the heart
Of such, and fix the God-appointed task.

CONSECRATION: UNION: POWER

Thou shalt supply our lives and theirs with Grace
To ever strive and fight for Thee
In fearless truth and constancy;
Of effort not to count the cost or space.
Thou shalt refresh the humblest and the least
Of all Thy creatures here on earth,
Illuminating our rebirth
With Light Divine from Eucharistic Feast.

THE SUNDIAL

I MARK the circling hours, thus Time shall give
No fragrant day or night to pass in vain.
Through sun and shade remember while you live
That every Sun shall set to rise again.

LIFE'S LOGIC

I. TO A CHILD

IF I should tell thee the secret
Now what wouldest thou guess it to be?
Confidence shall not make upset
In worlds full of wonder for thee.

Shall it be told on the mountain
Soft whispers may tarnish the snow?
Or by the splash of the fountain,
Where comfrey and willow-herb grow?

If told in depths of the green wood
Squirrels may hear it at play!
If breathed on gust of the storm-flood,
Night may reveal it to Day!

The stars may quiver its glory
O'er a sleeping, a-dreaming world!
The sea may echo its story
Ere the sea-gull's wing be unfurled!

LIFE'S LOGIC

Child, am I late in the telling?
Have mountain snows made thee their own?
Late in dream-fancies expelling?
Have forest flowers tiny seeds sown?

Squirrels at play in the beech-trees
Exampled a lesson in strife!
Have they with snows, flow'rs, and sea-breeze
First whisper'd the logic of life?

II. TO YOUTH

UNDER the span of the rainbow stood
Youth with delight in his eyes,
Holding aloof from life's playful mood
He lingered in half surprise.

Intently he watched the destined will
Of Fate as she spun her thread,
Twisting her spindle with crafty skill
Through the years that loom ahead.

Till Fate arose from her iris throne,
Commanding the youth by name
To start on that upward climb alone
To the dazzling heights of fame.

“May Happiness speed along thy path
As far as thy youth shall last,
Only remember the aftermath
That comes when the die is cast.

LIFE'S LOGIC

“Logic of life and philosophy
May fathom questioning fears,
Alone the Dawn of Eternity
Shall answer the riddle of years.”

III. TO OLD AGE

FROM isle sea-girt the lonely ilex spreads
Over the rippling waves
That gently cover many watery graves:
A way-worn monk in solitude there treads,
With breviary in hand,
O'er stretch of sand.

To him the voice of silence speaks once more
Of chance and change, that quickened years ago
Forced on by ebb and flow
Of tides that turned, and turning swept the shore.
The old monk cried—
“Where is the safety bought by One who died
“That all might be forgiven? Where the love
That rescued those that fall?
And where the peace that passeth over all
Who understand? Is there no God above
To banish fears within,
To conquer sin?”

LIFE'S LOGIC

But as the monk passed thro' the cloister gate,
Many a flower from oleander plant
In sacred covenant
Cast petal after petal, desolate
And drooping, one
By one, until the fateful deed was done.

Life's sacrifice for monk and crimson flowers
Demands the bitter cost,
Of many withered hopes—love's labour lost;
And yet thro' all life's transient evening hours
Love, shift thy copyhold
From dross to gold.

THE BLUE BIRD

SYMBOL OF HAPPINESS: AFTER MAURICE
MAETERLINCK

DOWN the mountain slopes, where the gentians
blow
Deep blue, when the frost's embrace
Has melted away with the sun-kissed snow,
A bird flew apace, apace!

Through the sylvan glades where the blue-bells
spread
The bird never stayed his flight:
The flax-flower bent to the stars overhead,
As he passed on the wings of night.

Forget-me-nots paled on Memory's bank,
Violets sweet scented the air,
But the larkspur pined in solitude dank,
The corn-flowers waved in despair.

THE BLUE BIRD

Frail columbines boasted of many loves
In shelter under the hill,
They hinted the presence of circling doves
Faint love-in-the-mist to thrill.

For the flowers bemoaned the sudden flight
Of the bird that they held so dear;—
From the sunset glow in the fading light
Are fashioned the shadows of fear.—

Yet close to the boundary line there grew
One flower of quite humble mien;
Her brilliant eye of heavenly blue
The bird swept past unseen.

Then she whispered her own prerogative:—
“Speed well, and God speed thy way
From the shadow land where the blue flowers live
To the land where the flowers grow gray.

“ If the birds of blue and the flowers of blue
Be lost to Man’s blinded eyes,
They flutter afresh, and blossom anew
In the garden of Paradise.”

A REVERIE

FROM THE SOUTH

ALL thro' the Spring with idle fancies playing—
A Tho' I waited but in vain—
I wondered if the winds of March were staying
The sting of secret pain.

All thro' the cloudless Summer days I sought thee—
Yet no echo reached my ears—
I wondered if the pale wild-roses brought thee
Peace in sunlit years.

All thro' the Autumn when the leaves turned golden
On the poplar's topmost bough,
I wondered if suspense, her gift withholden,
Had sealed her sacred vow.

All thro' the storm-swept Winter days I sought thee—
But thou camest not, fair child—
I wondered if the Christmas-tide had taught thee
Love reconciled.

THE PASSING OF THE YEAR

THE Old Year dies! So memory leaves behind
A tide of passing thought, of shifting scene,
And even at the turning strains to find
The reason why such things have ever been.

The Old Year dies!

The New Year lives! Yet ere the gray dawn breaks
In silver streaks across the silent sea,
One tiny spark of Conscience reawakes
To reason why such things shall ever be.

The New Year lives!

JANUARY 11th, 1905—1910

FULL peaceful years! Who dares to bring thee
back,

Lest one hour's joy might vanish at the call,
Lest foot-prints traced might miss the beaten track,
Lest days re-spent might tend to disenthral.

Five happy years! I count thee as the best
That Destiny hath given me to spend,
So come what may—Oblivion hold the rest—
With thankful heart I journey to the end.

FREESIAS

IN THE PRIOR'S GARDEN ON THE AVENTINE,
ROME

FREESIAS creamy white, trumpets all complete,
Down the gentle breeze subtle scent they bring:
Fragrance from garden blown across the street
Scatters in gusts the sweetness of the Spring.

Frail leaves bend low'neath Zephyr's chastening kiss:
Pale clusters gain a golden gleam at dawn
From sunshine's birth: on mornings such as this
May draws aside her curtain heaven-born.

Seeking a path where idleness may roam,
The choice is ours: yon bay tree avenue:
Half veiled, in distance seen, Saint Peter's dome
Uplifts our gaze to vault of cloudless blue.

FREESIAS

Freesias creamy white, one continuous line
Fringes the border near the ilex grove;
What joy to climb the hill-side Aventine
Only to find this garden's treasure-trove.

Garden where oft the Knights of Malta came
Faithful to help tired pilgrims on their way;
Such chivalry God-sent may yet inflame
The hearts of men whose passion is their play.

Freesias in mass where weary feet once trod
Hallow that Past; so men may still find room
Offerings to plant acceptable to God
Of simple flowers that only live to bloom.

SPRING

THE Spring is born!
Out in the silence at the break of dawn
The throstle sings;
I hear the welcome in his quivering wings.

Green grow the hills
And green the valleys with their sparkling rills;
At dawn of day
The sunbeams dance along the primrose way.

One moment brief
Gives careless birth to one pale primrose leaf:
March daffodils
Wave gold reflections in those sparkling rills.

The Spring is here!
The vernal season of the changing year,
When green things thrive
And all the world feels glad to be alive

SPRING

'Twixt sea and sky,
While little fleecy clouds trail softly by,
The great ships pass;
I watch them passing from the wind-swept grass.

From near to far
Seaward they turn across the harbour bar,
Far, far from home—
Spring will have gone before they homeward come.

And so one day
O'er tideless seas a ship shall make her way,
The chart unknown;
I shall be sailing in that ship alone.

At break of dawn
The birds must sing in chorus, and from morn
The sun ne'er fail;
But as the sunset fades, my ship will sail.

SOCCHIEVA

To A. W.

WHERE hornbeams bend to form a cloistered
aisle,

The sunlight flickers 'twixt the fitful shade:
Socchieva welcomes with her peerless smile
My restless soul beneath her leafy glade.

My restless soul, that craves for Nature's balm,
Blest solace finds amid her terraced vines,
That open from the wilder, wider calm
Of valley's stretch to mountain's distant lines.

They stand a silent tryst against the sky,
Crag upon crag sun bathed, peak after peak;
With awe inspired they check the passers by
Half frightened at the sympathy they seek.

Come stay awhile among her autumn flowers
In Beppo's garden, where the lizards bask;
On shady bench forget Time's fleeting hours,
Let Nature set some still inviolate task.

SOCCHIEVA

Or wander where the river's silver stream
Glides onward past the headland at the bend,
Filling the wood with some strange fable dream
Of sylvan fancies, as we reascend.

Or mark the toil of fairy fingers deft
At work among the gentians as we pass,
Stealing through art long practised to the theft
From blue above the blue amid the grass.

October's vintage crowned with purple grapes
From brimming vat flows forth in blood-red wine:
Ripe Indian corn bursts out its pearly shapes
To worship at the harvest's golden shrine.

Twice golden days! I yearn for thee the more
When caged within this city's grim gray walls:
Ah! give me back such days as heretofore
Unchanged and gay fond memory still recalls.

That I may leave the city's noisy mart,
The haunts of men, the chink of jingling gold,
To lay my heart upon her throbbing heart,
To rest at peace as in the days of old.

ALMOND FLOWERS

THE almond flower, so bare of leaf,
Of Spring the purest gem—
Pale petals pink in bold relief
That flit along a stem.

By gusty winds pink petals blown
Pursue the Infinite,
Elusive as the softest down
Far scattered in the night.

Life's roving dreams that come and go,
Whispers of hidden things;
One fancy whim that spurns man so
To shatter all it brings;

Wishes that course the furthest race
Turn weary in the strife;
These vanish into airy space,—
The almond flowers of life.

IN MEMORIAM

SAINT PETER'S CHURCH, BRACKLEY

To E. G. C.

O F childhood's days to that fair memory due
These three-fold lights recall one name
In painted glass of gem-like fame,
Whence emerald rays, then rays of deepest blue
Like sapphires gleam, then rays of ruby red
Pay honour to a soldier son:
He gave his life for victory, won
By gift alone that sanctifies the dead.

Tread softly here, for see Saint Michael stands
Full-winged with golden peacock eye—
Emblem of all Eternity—
To do God's work, and with his fearless hands
He thrusts away the evil power that strives
To cloud light hope with grief and pain:
And lo! the face of Heaven again
Smiles down upon our wild and wayward lives.

IN MEMORIAM

Of noble mien Saint George of England slays
The dragon form that fain must yield;
In armour clad, with crimson shield
He spears his vanquished foe. Saint Alban's gaze
Scans every man, o'er distant lands afar
In pilgrim garb he journeys forth
To martyr's death, to test the worth
Of all men give, ere they too cross the bar.

From Bergendal they bring a wooden cross
To hang beneath, that marked his grave
Out where the sun-dried grasses wave
Across the lonely veldt, to mourn his loss,
But yet to bless the Hand that snatched away
One so belov'd by all, and best
By some who pray the silent Rest
To grant him peace, until the Dawn of Day.

MAN'S CHOICE

MAN'S destiny reveals below
Free choice toward a Father's will,
And as he wills come weal or woe,
The choice is made 'twixt good and ill.

All work that lies beneath his hands
Is surely meant for man to do:
For some go forth to foreign lands
To seek illusions strange and new.

And each has his appointed task;
The men of wisdom from the east
Knelt low before the Child to ask
His blessing on their fast and feast.

Their myrrh and frankincense and gold
To bring to Him they journey'd far:
May such as these God's grace enfold
And point the value of a star.

MAN'S CHOICE

While others scorn the wider road
To pass along a narrow way:
Alone they bear their weighty load
To eventide of life's brief day.

Yet these may choose the wiser part
To walk in union with the Lord,
Confessing from a contrite heart
Obedience to His written word.

The choice is ours—which lot we cast,
But whether we enjoy the feast,
Or whether we abstain in fast,
Demands the sanction of the Priest.

SILENT VOICES

To H. E. in memoriam

THROUGH the long night watch a voice said,
 "Wait
 For the skill of human hand."
In the hush of life a Voice cried, "Come
 Away to the Silent Land."
When at break of day the dawn awoke
 The rooks in the tree overhead,
The Voice that is voiceless whispered, "Peace"
 To the hour of the passing dead.
At the break of dawn a voice said, "Rest,
 For thy strength is wellnigh spent."
The Voice that is voiceless cried, "Behold!
 Life's shadowy veil is rent."
O'er his grave flower-strewn a thrush on high
 A requiem sang heart-whole,
God's voice in the bird re-echoed the Love
 That welcomes a travelled soul.

SILENT VOICES

A generous heart has gone to rest
With the stillness and peace of night;
But the self that is self lives on with God
In the glow of Eternal Light.

THE FOUR WINDS

THE wind of Desire blew over the land,
Over the hill and across the plain;
The people rushed in a ruthless band
To gather the spoils of their wanton gain.

The wind of Distress arose in force,
Played havoc athwart man's eager ways,
For craftiness proved the one resource
To stay the fate of such evil days.

The wind of Despair moaned over the land,
Across the plain and over the hills,
And scattered the men, as grains of sand
That fly the storm, with its haunting ills.

But Destiny's wind brought some release,
And peace was borne on every breath;
The peace that comes in the hour of peace
To offer the welcome gift of death.

“THE PRICE OF WISDOM IS ABOVE RUBIES”

A PART from courtly crowd, in peerless grace
Alone she stands; upon her queenly face
No trace of ennui shall her courtiers find;
Large is her sympathy of heart and mind.
In silken sheen of texture soft and light
Aglow with gleaming gold, here burnished bright,
And there in harmony her form reveals
A flash of jewels rare, whose radiance steals
From diamond crown to rubies on her breast,
So that her contours seemingly suggest
Perfection's pride, in majesty alone
She stands; while beauty circling round the throne
Grows pale beside such timely grace and charm.
Beyond the ken of admiration's harm
She smiles a greeting to the favoured few,
And in that smile men read that love lives true,
That faith survives and quickens into life
The noblest aspirations in the wife,

“THE PRICE OF WISDOM”

And in the woman values that outshine
All pomp of power, and give a touch divine
To all that state and state-craft can demand,
“The utmost for the highest” thro’ the land.

THE GIFT

ONE drop of the great wide ocean
Was scattered afar in spray,
So careless 'midst wild commotion
Of waves and winds at play;
But after the waves had broken,
And the winds grown still and kind,
I found there a crystal token,
A beryl stone left behind.

VALSE CAPRICE

RUBINSTEIN

To Anna Pavlova

IF flowers had wings, if butterflies by chance
Could breathe a lasting spell o'er sunlit days,
How could they dare to rival thee, whose ways
Dart like some nymph, then goad with playful glance
Thy Mordkin swain to catch thee in the dance?

So dance, Pavlova, dance while strains revive
Thy steps to chase the echo of the wind
In music of a free capricious kind:
Such flower-like grace thy fairy form shall give
To him thy stem, while others see and live.

The spring can live if autumn casts her bloom:
No bonds withhold the pulses of those feet
First swift then slow: Ah! hear the music beat!
'Tis life to watch such movements banish gloom,
In ecstasy alone thou findest room.

LOVE'S GARDEN

ROSEMARY for Memory
And lavender gray,
Wild thyme and sweetbriar
With leaves of bay.

For friendship roses,
Deep crimson flowers;
Lilies and lilacs,
In sunlit bowers.

Pale pinks and pansies,
Iris, mauve, blue;
With wreaths of jasmine
Love twines for you.

EDWARD THE PEACEMAKER

MAY 6TH, 1910

FROM land to land the message flashed apace,
O'er world-wide seas: an empire numb with
grief

And haunted by wild fears, in bold relief
Stands frozen from the chill of death's embrace:
A pall of darkness sweeps the human race.

King among men, and man of kingly mien,
A king himself—now all is hushed and still—
In him great majesty aspired to fill
Earth's kingdom with the strength that thrives
between
A people's will and powers of things foreseen.

Nine summer suns have risen, then have set;
Nine summer suns have whispered peaceful truce
To rival nations careless to reduce
Mere boast of claim; thus Time shall ne'er forget
To breathe his name, and with no vain regret.

THE SONG OF LIFE

SO men shall sing, and should the road prove long
The journey's end will come at close of day;
Let words of praise add value to the song
We sing to-day along life's winding way—

Ah, some may sing, and tears so quickly flow—
Big silent tears that tell a silent past,—
Lost tears let loose to soothe long years ago
The heart's sad ache for memories that last.

While others sing, and prospects white and fair
Procession down the avenue they rove,
As summer lilies in the evening air
Breathing around deep purity of love.

The song of life, so be it gay or sad,
Accompanies the traveller on his road;
Uplifts the broken-hearted, makes him glad—
For young and old it lightens half the load.

THE SONG OF LIFE

And with the end, when Death so gently brings
The passport to a larger world in sight,
It sings again that Love and Life are wings
On which to soar through God's sunwoven light.

IN THE CAMPO SANTO

PISA

WITHIN these spellbound walls awhile to rest
'Neath dark-set shadows thrown by cypress
spires;

What solemn dirge soft sung by heaven's choirs
In unison could lull me, as thy breast
O Earth, my Mother, here? then let my breath
Implore Thee grant me in such holy shrine
A place to find, a Sanctuary divine:
There I may yield thee all that still is mine,
A life's work done, a life at peace in death.

SAN ROSSORE

FAIR was the summer-set weather
So gently it played on the breeze,
As four of us wandered together
Far to the shores of the seas.
Through the dark pine-woods straying,
Talking of times that have been:
Oh! it was good to be playing
In playgrounds so fragrant and green.

Here a stray orchis found thriving
Enricheth the searches of hours:
And there a honey'd bee diving
Delveth the heart of the flowers.
Sainfoin and meadow-sweet grew there
In patches of citron and rose,
By Arno's wide waters to woo there
Wayfarers seeking repose.

'Midst cornlands and vineyards so planted
Gay poppies bloom freely at will,
But scorn in their freedom thus granted
Man's store-house with plenty to fill.

WHEN THE LILACS BLOW

To C. D. in memoriam

WE never thought to see the lilacs blow
This sad chill year; we idled far from home,
In southern lands there listlessly to roam—
When suddenly a message bade us go.

“Go quickly thence to where the lilacs blow—”
And all our pulses felt to throb and beat:
Men passed us strangely in the sun-scorched street
And heedless went their ways, as ebb-tides flow.

But when we came to see the lilacs blow
Around her home, a silence set and still
Had hushed for ever all her ways and will:
We could not realize our grief and woe.

They softly laid her where her lilacs blow
To sleep her sleep in holy ground at rest,

WHEN THE LILACS BLOW

Where every year all those who love her best
Shall feel her presence, as they come and go.

God grant whene'er they see the lilacs blow
In spring's fair promise of a rising dawn,
They may remember that the life they mourn
Still spreads afar a fadeless after-glow.

“THE DESERT SHALL REJOICE, AND
BLOSSOM AS THE ROSE”

Isaiah, xxxv, 1.

WITHIN these walls so close confined
I lose my way:
Closed walls prevent fresh casts of mind
From day to day.

Above—beyond the hill-side lies
Wide stretched to sight,
Above—the dome of cloudless skies,
Beyond—the light.

Yet silence, silence everywhere!
Lone tracks untrod
Enwreathe my steps; lone paths prepare
My way to God.

Where cloudland, moorland answer me
In mock disdain—
“In search of peace and liberty
He walks in vain.

THE DESERT SHALL REJOICE

“No timeless flight of hours can heal
A wounded heart:
No space or distance yet reveal
The healer’s art.”

The scene may shift to desert ground,
To wilderness
Of sand, with no oasis found
But loneliness.

O Solitudes, that call for me
Across the years,
Not all the vast expanse of sea
Shall calm my fears.

No gates of fantasy, ajar
In mingled hours
Of sun and moon, shall open far
Strange, hidden powers.

Alone within one still small voice
Directs man’s heart:—
“Arise at once, and still rejoice
To play life’s part.

AND BLOSSOM AS THE ROSE”

“O'er scorching sands, o'er ocean wide,
O'er stretch of snows,
Live on, and work till Eventide
Shall death disclose.

“ Make all waste places blossom free
With flowers unseen,
And breathe to living that to be
From what has been.”

DELPHINIUMS

A LONG the yews tall spiring blues
Of mystic tones and pale,
Or powder blues with purplish hues,
Or mauves where blues prevail.

A blue display to hold the day,
At night beneath the moon
To stay the bane of summer's wane
From waning fast and soon.

If azure sky in space on high
If lapis deep of sea,
Turn gray beside the garden's pride
Of blue festivity,

Did goddess fair just over there,
In league with mortal youth,
Forget her shroud of borrowed cloud
In very deed and truth?

DELPHINIUMS

In flight anon, so swiftly gone,
She left a tell-tale trace,
Of heaven's love, unseen above,
To veil her earthly grace.

Through haze and mist the sun half kissed
Her fleecy shroud away,
Where blossoms blue were born to you
To crown a summer's day.

AT HAMPTON COURT

ALL that we hold the fairest
In a world so fair,—
Fairer because thou sharest
Beyond compare
My joy in this day of being,—
Lies here outspread
In a garden worth the seeing,
Ere its charm has fled.

In stiff and ordered keeping
The ages pass,
Each shadow softly creeping
O'er stone and grass:
Here too an old-time glory
From the lips of seers
Echoes the thread of the story
To the coming years.

Of the past in the Tudor ages,
Both of men and ways,
What can they tell us, these sages?
And of later days

AT HAMPTON COURT

The great monumental traces
Of the hand of Wren,
What do they say, these places,
To living men?

Near to the flowering border,
Where the ramblers twine,
Climbing in gay disorder
With the eglantine,
Grow tangled masses of roses
Crimson and pink and white;
The secret in each discloses
Just a little light.

And memories link together
In a chain of thought,
With the whirl and change of weather
By seasons wrought:
Yet the rose and Time and my heart
Are at one with thee,
Till the break in the link shall part
Life's company.

CUPID'S FLIGHT

FROM north to south we plead, from far and wide,

With Love to stay:

Wild playful elf, when hovering at our side

He decks life's way.

To him alone our thoughts inflamed with fire

We shall unfold,

And bind to wings aflame each heart's desire

With threads of gold.

Thro' fields sun-blest we sing a gayer song—

Elysian fields—

Love over all, as we two pass along,

His sceptre yields.

Shall rainbow wings then grow for thee and me,

In poet's flight

To migrate whence gray grim philosophy

Usurps her right?

CUPID'S FLIGHT

Thro' flowery glades to glance ere suns shall set
With words for wings,
And sing of things divine, and then of yet
Diviner things.

MYSTERY

M YSTERY lies above him,
Mystery lies below,
But Life's greatest mystery
Man may never know!

Man claims all around him,
Earth and sea and sky:
But when Death claims Man, we
Only question why?

TO THE LADY OF THE LAMP

NO further fall the shadows at thy feet,
The hand of Time has closed the tale of years;
The lamp that lit thy path thus disappears
To leave a path for others fair and sweet.
One great Idea possessed thy busy life—
One great Idea!—at first it met with strife,
With red-tape bickerings, and with envious hate,
Long since forgotten by a grateful State.

In times bygone capacity that wrought
And genius born of love disproved all fears:
Shall dust of ages through the passing years
So softly bless thee for thy heart-felt thought?
From lips of soldiers named the soldiers' friend!
To thee, farewell. At thy long journey's end
Full many, whom thy anxious loving care
Once saved from Death's chill kiss, shall greet thee
There.

THE SANCTUARY

ST. PAUL'S

IN passing contrast to the humming din
Of ceaseless traffic, as it comes and goes
Beneath the great gray walls, men seek repose,
Seek solitude and silence here within!
A dim veiled vision o'er the vaulted dome,
The mystic presence of the Christ in white
Transforms man's mind ; enthroned in rainbow light
He whispers low, so low! "In peace to-night
My Father's House to all presents a home."



CHISWICK PRESS: CHARLES WHITTINGHAM AND CO.
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE, LONDON.

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PRINTED IN U.S.A.

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